

§ 842.88

prudent person under similar circumstances.

(e) *Proximate cause.* The dominant or primary cause involving a natural and continuous sequence unbroken by an effective cause.

§ 842.88 Delegations of authority.

(a) *Settlement authority.* (1) Subject to the prior written, approval of the United States Attorney General or his designee, the following individuals have delegated authority to settle claims in excess of \$25,000, to settle claims for \$25,000 or less, and to deny a claim in any amount:

- (i) The Judge Advocate General.
- (ii) The Deputy Judge Advocate General.
- (iii) The Director of Civil Law.

(2) Subject to the prior written approval of the United States Attorney General or his designee, the Chief, Claims and Tort Litigation Staff has delegated authority to settle claims in excess of \$25,000 up to a limit of \$50,000, to settle claims for \$25,000 or less; and to deny a claim in any amount.

(3) The Deputy Chief and Branch Chiefs, Claims and Tort Litigation Staff have delegated authority to settle claims for \$25,000 or less and deny a claim in any amount.

(4) The SJA of HQ 9AF for CENTCOM, and SJAs of PACAF and USAFE have delegated authority to settle claims payable, and deny claims filed, for \$25,000 or less.

(5) The following individuals have delegated authority to settle claims payable, and deny claims filed, for \$15,000 or less:

- (i) SJAs of single base GCMs.
- (ii) SJAs of GCMs in PACAF and USAFE.
- (iii) SJAs of each Air Force base, station, or fixed installation.

(b) *Redelegation of authority.* A settlement authority may be redelegated, in writing, to a subordinate judge advocate or civilian attorney.

(c) *Authority to reduce, withdraw, and restore settlement authority.* Any superior settlement authority may reduce, withdraw, or restore delegated authority.

(d) *Settlement negotiations.* A settlement authority may settle a claim filed in any amount for a sum within

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the delegated authority. Unsettled claims in excess of the delegated authority will be sent to the next highest level with settlement authority. Unsuccessful negotiations at one level do not bind higher authority.

(e) *Special exceptions.* Do not settle claims for the following without HQ USAF/JACC approval:

- (1) Legal malpractice.
- (2) On the job personal injury or death of an employee of a government contractor or subcontractor.
- (3) Assault, battery, false imprisonment, false arrest, abuse of process, or malicious prosecution committed by an investigative or law enforcement officer.
- (4) Animal bites.
- (5) Personal injury from asbestos or radon.
- (6) Medical malpractice.

[55 FR 2809, Jan. 29, 1990, as amended at 56 FR 1574, Jan. 16, 1991]

§ 842.89 Statute of limitations.

A claim must be presented in writing within 2 years after it accrues.

(a) Federal, not state law, determines the time of accrual. A claim normally accrues at the time of injury when essential operative facts are apparent. However, in other instances, especially in complex medical malpractice cases, a claim accrues when the claimant discovers or reasonably should have discovered the existence of the act that resulted in the claimed loss.

(b) In computing the statutory time period, the day of the incident is excluded and the day the claim was filed is included.

(c) The Air Force has 6 months to consider a properly filed claim, after which the claimant may file suit. The claimant's right to sue ends 6 months from the date the final denial is mailed.

(d) Properly asserted third party actions, as permitted under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, may be brought against the United States without first filing a claim. In such instances those actions may start more than 2 years after the claim has accrued.

[55 FR 2809, Jan. 29, 1990, as amended at 55 FR 32077, Aug. 7, 1990]